



United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Accounting and Information
Management Division

B-276274

July 18, 1997

The Honorable Alfonse M. D'Amato
Chairman
The Honorable Paul S. Sarbanes
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
United States Senate

The Honorable James A. Leach
Chairman
The Honorable Henry B. Gonzalez
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Banking and Financial Services
House of Representatives

Subject: Jefferson's Poplar Forest Commemorative Coin Program

Section 303 of Public Law 103-186 required us to audit the use of commemorative coin surcharge proceeds received by the Corporation for Jefferson's Poplar Forest. The Corporation owns and operates Poplar Forest, President Thomas Jefferson's former home in Bedford County, Virginia. Title I of Public Law 103-186, the Jefferson Commemorative Coin Act of 1993, provided that the Corporation use the surcharge proceeds from the sale of commemorative coins to restore and maintain Poplar Forest.

We determined that the Corporation received about \$998,000 in final coin surcharge proceeds from the U. S. Mint in 1994 and established an endowment consisting of invested surcharge proceeds and related earnings in November 1995. The purpose of the endowment is to provide financial resources to restore and maintain Poplar Forest. As of April 1997, the Corporation had not made any expenditures from the endowment, other than related investment fees. The endowment balance as of April 1997 was about \$1.3 million.

Section 5134 of Title 31, United States Code, as amended by Public Law 104-208, now requires future coin surcharge recipients to (1) separately account for the expenditure of coin surcharge proceeds and (2) obtain annual financial audits

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by an independent public accounting firm until all surcharge proceeds are expended or placed in trust.¹

In conducting our work, we obtained direct confirmation from the U.S. Mint of the amounts of surcharge proceeds transferred to the Corporation. We traced those amounts to the Corporation's bank statements and accounting records, reviewed the Corporation's accounting for the surcharge proceeds, traced selected transactions to source documents, and verified the endowment balance as of April 1997. We also reviewed minutes of the Board of Directors' meetings related to surcharge proceeds. At the conclusion of our work, we provided a draft of this letter to the Executive Director of the Corporation and she had no comments. Our audit was performed from February to May 1997 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Copies of this letter are being sent to interested parties and will be made available to others on request. Please contact me at (202) 512-9489 if you or your staffs have any questions about this letter.



David L. Clark
Director, Audit Oversight
and Liaison

(911737)

¹Section 529 of the Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations Act, 1997, as enacted by Section 101(f) of Public Law 104-208, the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, 1997, repealed section 303 of Public Law 103-186, effective September 30, 1996.

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